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Trinity Church in Athens, Alabama Celebrates 142 years of serving the community!



On September 1st Trinity UCC in Athens, Alabama celebrated their 142nd Anniversary.

Their accomplishments, particularly their racial and educational leadership, were celebrated in the Huntsville Times this past week. The article highlights Celestine Higgins Bridgeforth, now 93, who was educated at Trinity



school beginning in Kindergarten in the 1920s when the school had black and white faculty members. She later taught at the school, alongside the last of the missionaries from the American Missionary Society. She learned how to play piano at the school through the music classes there, a unique offering at the time. This skill served her well as she is now the church pianist at Trinity. [You can find the story by clicking here.](#)



The church and the school were founded by Mary Francis Wells, a white woman who came from the North to serve as a nurse for Union soldiers during the Civil War. When the war was over she stayed in Athens to help provide education for the newly freed slave children. Other teachers at that time were Northern white women sponsored by the American Missionary Society. In the beginning, the school had nearly as many adult students as children, because there was so much desire to learn in the wake of slavery. The school stood in the face of racist resistance from the KKK and survived as an institution after twice being set on fire.



Celebrating the work of the church in the community over the last 142 years goes beyond the inception of the Trinity School. In 1939, Rev. Lloyd E. Galloway, a summer pastor from Talladega, organized the first Boy Scout Troop in Athens. In recent years the church has served the community through its “Food Barrel” program – donating non-perishable food items to the local food bank – participated in yearly school supply drives, and adopted a classroom at Tanner High

School. Deacon Charles Harris founded the Doxa Health Committee which sponsors health fairs in the community alongside various health activities in North Alabama such as cancer walks and 5K runs.

The current pastor, Rev. Gary Myers, was the first Trinity pastor to serve as Moderator of the Southeast Conference. He currently serves on the UCC National Nominating Committee and has served on several boards and committees at the Association, Conference and National levels. Rev. Myers has been pushing towards revitalization of the congregation, and the church has plans for a new educational development program for area youth as well as for building a new fellowship hall. Rev. Myers is known for his Bible study entitled "The Mind of Christ" and will be the keynote speaker for the upcoming ALA-TN Association annual meeting on September 13th.

Congratulations, Trinity UCC – we celebrate your many accomplishments and rich history with you!

Photo credit and story in Huntsville Times: Kay Campbell

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- Sep 30
- All Day - Retreat for Retired UCC Clergy
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- All Day - Women's UCC Southern Regional Conference
- Oct 26
- 9:00 AM - Member in Discernment/Exploration Fall Retreat

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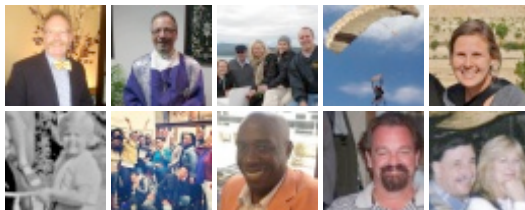
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